Volume 1,Issue 1

Spring 2000

The Newsletter of the Manchester Urban Ponds Restoration Project

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SEPP Cooperators:

- Manchester Conservation Commission

  Jane Beaulieau – Chair
  Kathleen Brown
  Joanne McLaughlin
  Todd Connors
  Eric Skoglund
  Jennifer Fox
  Christopher Hall

- NH Department of Environmental Services

- US Environmental Protection Agency

URBAN POND MEETINGS SUCCESSFUL

The Manchester Conservation Commission hosted two public meetings this winter to introduce the Urban Ponds Restoration Project (UPRP). The first meeting was held on December 7th at the Massebesic Audubon Center, and the second meeting was held at UNH-Manchester on March 1st.

Both meetings were well attended by members of the public, personnel from city, state and federal agencies, and non-profit organizations such as the Merrimack River Watershed Council. The plans for restoration of the seven ponds in the program were discussed in terms of the citizenry's role in the effort, as well as the goals for final outcome. With the help of the attendees of the meetings, a preliminary group of volunteers has been established to monitor water quality and take part in various conservation projects.

The meetings explained the goals of the project and how those goals will be obtained. With the help of community members, the ponds will be restored, to as natural a state as possible, to once again be suitable for their historic uses, such as swimming, fishing and other passive recreation.

It was emphasized that without participation by the general public, the project will not be able to reach its goals. Public users will determine how they would to see the ponds in the future, and this vision will be the driving force behind the project.

Public informational meetings will be held periodically in the future to further raise awareness of the program.

Manchester Urban Ponds Restoration

WHY WORRY ABOUT NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION ?

From: EPA. 1997. Managing Urban Runoff, Pointer No. 7. www.epa.gov/OWOW/NPS/facts/point7.htm.

Runoff from urban areas is one of the largest sources of water quality impairment to surveyed lakes. To protect surface water and ground water quality, urban development and household activities must be guided by plans that limit runoff and reduce pollutant loadings.

Communities need to address urban water

Continued on page 3.

NH VLAP is Answer to Water Quality Questions

"By sampling the lake several times each year, long term water quality trends can be discerned."

The UPRP will be using a tried and true method for water quality assessment during the upcoming season: The NH Volunteer Lake Assessment Program. Coordinated by the NH Dept. of Environmental Services, NH VLAP was initiated in 1985 to provide a way for lake associations and watershed citizens to be involved in lake protection and watershed management. Over 100 lake associations participate in this cooperative program (NH DES, WD-BB-26, 1997).

By sampling the lake several times each year over a period of years, long term water quality trends can be discerned. Samples are analyzed for pH, conductivity, acid neutralizing capacity, apparent color, chlorophyll-a, plankton microscopic analysis, total phosphorus, and *E. Coli* bacteria count (NH DES, WD-BB-26, 1997). All seven ponds in the UPRP will be assessed using NH VLAP, with the help of volunteers. Volunteers are trained in proper sample collection NH DES personnel. If you would like to volunteer for water quality monitoring, contact the Urban Ponds Restoration Project at 624-6450.

Non-Point Source Pollution

Continued from page 1.

quality problems on both a local and watershed level.

The porous and varied terrain of natural landscapes like forests, wetlands, and grasslands trap rainwater and snowmelt and allow it to slowly filter into the ground. Runoff tends to reach receiving waters gradually. In contrast, nonporous urban landscapes like roads, parking lots and buildings don't let runoff slowly percolate into the ground. Water runs off quickly and flushes accumulated contaminants into the nearest receiving water body.

Cities install storm drain systems that quickly channel runoff from roads and other impervious surfaces. Runoff can gather speed inside the drainage systems, so when it leaves the systems and empties into a stream, large volumes of quickly flowing runoff erode streambanks, damage streamside vegetation, and widen steam channels. This leads to lower than normal flows during dry periods, and higher than normal flows during storm events. Increased sediment loads and higher water temperatures also result from intensive runoff from urban environments. Because of these factors, native fish and other aquatic life cannot survive in heavily impacted urban streams.

Urbanization increases the variety and amount of pollutants transported to these receiving waters. Sediment from development and new construction; oil and grease, and toxic chemicals from automobiles; nutrients and pesticides from turf management and gardening; viruses and bacteria from failing septic systems; road salts; and heavy metals are examples of pollutants generated in urban environments. Sediments and solids make up the largest percentage of pollutants to receiving waters in urban areas.

Don't Let our Future go Down the Storm Drain

By: Katie Hughes

One way to help prevent future pollution of our waterways is to improve our usage and maintenance of storm drains. Currently, many forms of pollution enter our storm drains everyday. Some are due to improper system management, but others are due to lack of education and human errors. Here are a few ways to improve the conditions of our waterways via stormdrains:

- Never throw away litter in streets or storm drains and pick up visible litter in these areas
- Sweep, do not wash, any fertilizer or soil off driveways and walkways
- Eliminate or minimize usage of pesticides
- Use alternatives to pesticides and herbicides when possible
- Dispose of pet waste by flushing down toilet
- Compost clippings and yard waste, then reuse your soil
- Never pour motor oil down storm drains, even in small quantities. Instead, put it in a sturdy container and bring it to a local service station to be recycled
- Take anti-freeze to local service stations to be recycled
- Never dump household hazardous waste, such as bleach, paint thinners, mothballs, oven cleaners, or nail polish remover down any drain, toilet, or in regular trash. Use local toxic waste disposal in your area
- Donate old paint to local schools or community groups instead of throwing away in regular garbage or storm drains
- Start a storm drain stenciling project in you local community or join one in progress. You can contact your city or town office to inquire if such a project already exists in your area. For more information about how to start a stenciling program visit the Hillsborough County Conservation District or call them at 603-673-2409.

To find out about you own local home hazardous waste collection site and dates call DES at (603) 271-2902

Dorrs Pond Sewer Solution

Dorrs Pond, which has been the focus of a substantial amount of work recently, received a reprieve from further pollution from an illegal sewer connection in March. A restaurant in the Maple Tree Mall on Hooksett Road was inappropriately connected to a drain line that empties directly into a tributary to Dorrs Pond. For an undetermined amount of time, raw sewage has been dumping into this tributary, polluting the Pond. Upon finding the source of the pollution, the Manchester Environmental Protection Division and the Health Department terminated the illegal sewer connection. The stream no longer smells of sewage, but there are still two questionable culverts that empty into the same stream.

Another inlet to Dorrs Pond will run cleaner in the near future thanks to the Dorrs Pond Preservation Society. A "Downstream Defender" will be installed at a major inlet point at the Pond's north end, to catch sediment and other pollutants before they enter the Pond. This will be accojmplished through grant money received from NH DES.

"...raw sewage has been dumping into this tributary, polluting the Pond."

Manchester
Urban Ponds
Restoration

Phone: 603-624-6450
Email: agrindle@ci.manchester.nh.us

The **Manchester Urban Ponds Restoration Project** is part of a greater environmental effort now underway in Manchester. As part of a long-term combined-sewer-overflow control strategy, six major environmental initiatives, involving numerous city, state, federal, non-profit, and community organizations, are kicking off throughout the city. The Supplemental Environmental Projects Plan (SEPP), spanning five years, includes programs for: Land preservation, storm water control, streambank stabilization, reduction of environmental health risk to children, environmental education, and urban pond restoration. Without collaboration and community involvement, none of these programs can be successful.

Calendar of Events

- **April 22** – Earth Day
- **May 6** – Dorrs Pond Clean Up Day, 10am – 2pm.
- **May 6** – Environmental Festival, Amoskeag Fishways, 12pm – 4pm.
- **May 20** – Crystal Lake Clean Up Day, 9am – 12pm.
- **June 3** – Dorrs Pond Clean Up Day, 10am – 2pm.
- **July 8** – Dorrs Pond Clean Up Day, 10am – 2pm.

Nutts Pond Now Cleaner Thanks to Volunteers

"...volunteers toiled to extract 15 tires..., 3 metal barrels, 2 shopping carts, and a computer monitor... from the pond."

A clean up day was held at Nutts Pond, adjacent to Precourt Park, off South Willow Street on April 15th. In cooperation with Adopt-A-Block, the Urban Ponds Restoration Project teamed up with local volunteers to remove a substantial amount of refuse from Nutts Pond.

Trash removed from Nutts Pond

With the temperature near 80 degrees, 11 dedicated volunteers toiled to extract 15 tires (3 still on rims), 3 metal barrels, 2 shopping carts, a computer monitor, a folding metal chair, a gas tank filled with an unknown substance (possibly propane or helium), a car fender, pieces of a picnic table, and various pieces of metal debris (pipes, sheet metal, etc.) from the pond. The volunteers also filled approximately 60 large garbage bags with litter that was collected.

Many thanks are owed to the John Devine Drive Shop-n-Save for donating support materials and personnel, as well as Bradlee's on South Willow Street who also donated support materials and willing personnel. Also involved in the clean up were the Boy Scouts of America, the Manchester Conservation Commission, the Manchester Parks & Recreation Department, as well as concerned community citizens.